

Date: February 27, 2019

Attn: Members of the Education Committee

Subject: **Opposition to SB #738 (Looney) SB #457 (Duff) & SB #874 (Lamont)**

As a lifelong resident of Wilton CT, a taxpayer and product of the Wilton School System (K – 12 graduating in 1969) I write to strongly oppose SB# 738(Senator Martin Looney), SB# 457(Senator Bob Duff), and SB# 874 (Gov. Ned Lamont) and any other bill that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut Public Schools. I oppose this plan on many, many levels and emphasize the following:

1. The quality of the Wilton School system which generations of my family attended and that has been central to our extended family's decision until now to remain in Connecticut.
2. The role that the quality and the character of our **local *not regional* schools play**, which is the very heart of our community and communities across Connecticut and at the core of Connecticut's history.
3. The certain economic devastation that this reckless proposal will cause resulting from reluctance of families to move to Connecticut and elimination of one of the primary reasons people remain. As a professional in corporate relocation and consultant to many multinational corporations for over 40 years I know firsthand that the quality and community-based structure of Connecticut's schools is paramount to our State's ability to attract and retain key talent.

I ask you to consider this bit of personal and state history to underscore the importance of preserving our independent, town-managed educational system.

In the year 1632 the ship Lion brought a party of settlers from England to the new colony of Massachusetts Bay. **Among the party was William Curtis my great-great-great-great-great-great grandfather.** His family joined him two years later and in 1639 they were among the seventeen people who settled the town of Stratford, Connecticut. Over time my family settled in Norwalk and then Wilton.

Fast forward to 1792 when the Wilton Parish School Committee created nine school districts and three years later these same nine districts became the **independent Wilton School Society**. Wilton's history records that church, home and education were central. These values remain and are part of our long history, the character of our community and our quality of life. This is a system that has served Connecticut well, has survived hundreds of years, and must not be changed.

I ask you to oppose SB 738, SB 457, SB 874, and any other legislation that opens the door to forced regionalization of Connecticut public schools.

Respectfully,

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